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## **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus and method for providing user access to a secured application. In one exemplary embodiment, a detector apparatus comprises a fingerprint sensor having a receiving portion that is configured to accept an authentication article. The fingerprint sensor detects one or more predetermined features of the authentication article and reads at least a portion of a fingerprint of a user. The authentication article may include a precious gem such as a diamond. The detector apparatus may further comprise a feature detection sensor in operative relation with the fingerprint sensor. The feature detection sensor detects the one or more of the predetermined features. The fingerprint sensor may be detachably coupled to a portable device having an interface for operably communicating with a computer system to determine an identity of the user. A method, comprising: reading the fingerprint of a user with a fingerprint sensor; detecting one or more features of an authentication article with the fingerprint sensor; analyzing at least a portion of the fingerprint to derive a first indication for verifying an identity of the user; analyzing at least one of the one or more features of the authentication article to derive a second indication for authenticating the fingerprint; and combining the first and second indications for selectively providing access to the secured application to the user.

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